DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 306 181 SO 019 863

AUTHOR Herman, Barry E.
TITLE Attitudes of New Haven Sixth Grade Students toward Thirty Ethnic Groups. Short Summary Version.
PUB DATE Jun 83
NOTE 13p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Attitude Measures; Childhood Attitudes; *Ethnic Bias; *Ethnic Relations; Grade 6; Intermediate Grades; Labeling (of Persons); Questionnaires; *Racial Bias; Racial Identification; *Racial Relations; *Student Attitudes
IDENTIFIERS Name Stereotypes; *Social Distance

ABSTRACT

An examination of approximately 400 New Haven, Connecticut sixth graders using a modified social distance scale and race questionnaire measured student attitudes towards different ethnic and racial groups. The group interview questionnaire was given to a racial and ethnic cross section of students in nine different schools. Students were asked to give their reactions to 30 different ethnic groups according to the 3 different relationship of classmate, playmate, and neighbor. The investigation lists 29 conclusions. The racial attitude tolerances cited are reflective of the racial mix of the schools, the achievement level of the students, and the type of social relationship in question. There is no significant variation between male and female students towards the different ethnic or racial groups. Individual groups react in various ways to the different possible ethnic terms as applied to their group, and as applied to other groups. The document includes a sample questionnaire, listings of mean tolerance scores towards ethnic groups by school and by ethnic group, and mean scores by schools for social distance groups. (PPB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED306181

SHORT SUMMARY VERSION

ATTITUDES OF NEW HAVEN SIXTH GRADE STUDENTS TOWARD THIRTY ETHNIC GROUPS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Investigated by

DR. BARRY E. HERMAN, 1982-83 BUSH FELLOW
BUSH CENTER IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL POLICY
AT YALE UNIVERSITY

AND ON SABBATICAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE
FROM THE NEW HAVEN SCHOOL SYSTEM AS
DIRECTOR OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND HEAD START

JUNE 1983

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
BARRY E. HERMAN

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

50019863

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This investigator examined the effect of measured student attitudes toward different ethnic and racial groups making up the population of New Haven by using a sampling of approximately 400 of New Haven's sixth graders.

The investigator also did a review of the literature and summarized those studies dealing with prejudice and interracial attitudes among children. The investigator hopes that this study will make a real contribution for the students, staff and parents of New Haven and that the findings will be important enough to enable researchers, school officials and others to help eliminate prejudice and discrimination. The results of the study might even influence state and federal legislators to introduce legislation which will cause for mandated units and curriculum in the areas of multiethnic, multi-cultural, intergroup and human relations.

STUDY RESEARCH DESIGN

The investigator developed a Group Interview Questionnaire to study ethnic attitudes among approximately 400 sixth grade students in New Haven, Connecticut. The Group Interview Questionnaire was modified from a social distance scale used by Bogardus and a race questionnaire devised by Zeligs and Hendrickson. Students in selected classrooms were given the questionnaire by the investigator himself to eliminate such variables as influence from the classroom teacher and students discussing their reactions to the items. He also was able to explain procedures and answer questions. The following schools were used in the study: Betsy Ross, East Rock, Fair Haven, Jackie Robinson, Nathan Hale, Roberto Clemente, Sheridan, and Troup. A parochial school, St. Aeden's was also included in the study. Thus, a good cross section of the entire city was realized. Since there are approximately 2000 sixth grade students in New Haven (1400 in the public schools), the 388 actual students used in this study provided a sample of about 20% of all sixth grade students in the city.

The investigator, by analyzing the scores of the sixth grade students taking the Group Interview Questionnaire, attempted to answer the following questions:

1. How do scores of Black students in mostly all Black schools compare with scores of Black students in integrated schools?

2. How do scores of White students in a mostly all White school compare with scores of White students in integrated schools?

3. How do scores of average-achieving students compare with scores of high-achieving students in particular schools?

4. How do scores of parochial school students compare with scores of public school students?

5. Does attitude among White, Black, and Hispanic students vary when the same stated ethnic group on the questionnaire has a different stated nomenclature, i.e., Negro, Black?

6. How do scores of boys compare with scores of girls?

PROCEDURES

On the Group Interview Questionnaire, the students were asked to give their reactions to thirty ethnic groups, many of whom live as sizable communities in New Haven. Three social distance relationships (classmate, playmate and neighbor) were listed next to each ethnic group. The children were instructed to check a "yes" or "no" in each of the spaces following the name of each ethnic group for a "classmate," "playmate," or "neighbor." In case the student was not familiar with the ethnic group in question, he was asked to check the box under the "not familiar" heading.

COMPUTER ANALYSIS

Reactions received from the students on the Group Interview Questionnaire were programmed into electronic computers using the research facilities of the Yale University Computer Center. The investigator received help from statistical programmers at the Bush Center and at the Yale Computer Center.

(COMBINATION OF FORMS I, II, III)

GROUP INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE II.

NAME:_____ SCHOOL:_____

ETHNIC GROUP	CLASSMATE	PLAYMATE	NEIGHBOR	NOT FAMILIAR
Russian	yes no	yes no	yes no	
Chinese	yes no	yes no	yes no	
German	yes no	yes no	yes no	
English	yes no	yes no	yes no	
Mexican	yes no	yes no	yes no	
American	yes no	yes no	yes no	
Dutch	yes no	yes no	yes no	
Negro/Black/Afro-American	yes no	yes no	yes no	
Irish	yes no	yes no	yes no	
Jewish	yes no	yes no	yes no	
American Indian	yes no	yes no	yes no	
Polish	yes no	yes no	yes no	
Puerto Rican	yes no	yes no	yes no	
White/Caucasian/Caucasian(White)	yes no	yes no	yes no	
Bologlian	yes no	yes no	yes no	
Arab	yes no	yes no	yes no	
Japanese	yes no	yes no	yes no	
Italian	yes no	yes no	yes no	
Korean	yes no	yes no	yes no	
Spanish/Latino/Hispanic	yes no	yes no	yes no	
Israeli	yes no	yes no	yes no	
Canadian	yes no	yes no	yes no	
Mulatto	yes no	yes no	yes no	
Portuguese	yes no	yes no	yes no	
French	yes no	yes no	yes no	
Cuban	yes no	yes no	yes no	
Vietnamese	yes no	yes no	yes no	
Egyptian	yes no	yes no	yes no	
Southerner	yes no	yes no	yes no	
Haitian	yes no	yes no	yes no	

Summary of Results of Study

The investigator found interesting data in analyzing the score of the 388 sixth grade students who filled out the Group Interview Questionnaire. The investigator reported the following conclusions:

1. Students gave the highest tolerance scores for the following ethnic groups: American, English, Black, American Indian, White, Italian, French, Chinese, and Southerner.
2. Students gave the lowest tolerance scores for the following ethnic groups: Bolgolian, Mulatto, Haitian, Vietnamese, and Arab.
3. Canadian, Dutch, Russian, Jewish, German, Japanese, Irish, Mexican, Korean, Vietnamese, Polish, Puerto Rican, Spanish, Israeli, Portuguese, Cuban, and Egyptian received low tolerance scores but were not at the lowest rank.
4. The Canadian, Irish, Jewish, and Dutch groups received suprisingly lower scores than expected.
5. East Rock and Sheridan showed the highest degree of tolerance toward the different ethnic groups. These two schools are racially mixed.
6. Jackie Robinson, Troup, Clemente, and Nathan Hale showed the lowest degree of tolerance toward different ethnic groups. Robinson and Troup are almost all-Black and Nathan Hale is almost all-White. Clemente is almost all-Minority (Black and Hispanic).
7. Sheridan showed a higher tolerance total (56.3) than St. Aeden's (47.2) even though both schools are racially mixed and serve children from the same section of the city.

8. Fair Haven and Betsy Ross, both racially mixed schools, scored above the average tolerance mean total, but their scores were not as high as Sheridan and East Rock. Scores at Fair Haven and Betsy Ross were higher than Robinson, Troup, Clemente, Nathan Hale, and St. Aeden's.
9. The findings of the study showed a greater acceptance of ethnic group individuals as Classmates and less acceptance as Playmates and Neighbors from the 388 subjects.
10. Whites and Asians showed a greater tolerance acceptance of different ethnic groups than did Blacks and Hispanics.
11. White students showed a significantly greater tolerance acceptance of different ethnic groups than did Black students.
12. White students in a racially mixed (Black/White/Hispanic) school were more tolerant toward different ethnic groups than were Whites in a racially mixed (Black/White) school or in an almost all-White school.
13. Black students in a racially mixed (Black/White/Hispanic) school were more tolerant toward different ethnic groups than were Blacks in a racially mixed (Black/White) school or in a racially mixed (Black/Hispanic) school.
14. It appears the greater the mix of ethnic and racial groups at a school, the more tolerance and acceptance of different groups will be shown by its students.
15. There was no significant difference statistically toward different ethnic groups from Black students who attended racially mixed schools or almost all-Black schools.
16. Black students in all the schools studied, never gave a perfect mean score of 3.0 to the ethnic group Negro/Black/Afro-American.

17. There was a significant difference statistically toward different ethnic groups for White students who attended racially mixed schools as compared with Whites in an all-White school. The Whites at the racially mixed schools showed higher tolerance scores than did the Whites at the almost all-White school.
18. The Whites at the almost all-White school gave a high tolerance score to the Negro/Black/Afro-American ethnic group on the Group Interview Questionnaire.
19. The Whites at the almost all-White school had lower social distance tolerance scores for ethnic group individuals as Classmate, Playmate, and Neighbor than did the Whites in the racially mixed schools.
20. There was no significant difference statistically between females (207) and males (181) in the study toward the different ethnic groups. The males tended to have higher tolerance scores than the females but the scores were not statistically significant.
21. High achieving students were more tolerant toward different ethnic groups than were average-achieving students at the four schools studied. It appears intelligence and ability seemed to be factors in racial and ethnic acceptance.
22. Bolgolian, a fictious ethnic group, received the greatest number of NOT FAMILIAR responses by students on the questionnaire. This was followed by Mulatto, Haitian, and Vietnamese.
23. White students did not differentiate among the ethnic names Negro/Black/Afro-American. But statistically, the Whites reacted negatively toward Caucasian as compared with White. They also rejected Latino but reacted positively toward Hispanic and Spanish ethnic names.

24. Black students showed no statistical difference to names Negro/Black/Afro-American, but reacted negatively toward Caucasian as compared with White. They gave high tolerance scores toward the Spanish name but rejected Hispanic and Latino ethnic names.
25. Hispanic students showed no significant differences in reacting to any of the selected ethnic names studied.
26. Sixth grade subjects involved in the study generally expressed true and honest feelings and attitudes toward the different ethnic groups listed on the Group Interview Questionnaire.
27. Students tended to reject ethnic groups with funny-sounding or foreign names such as Bogolian, Haitian, Mulatto, Vietnamese, etc.
28. Students showed low tolerance scores for Oriental and Hispanic ethnic groups.
29. Low scores for Japanese and German ethnic groups are probably attributed to attitudes from parents because of World War II and from old World War II movies seen on television.

In conclusion, the investigator felt the over-all ethnic tolerance scores by schools, by racial groups, by students, and by males and females were not that high but could be considered average or below average in many instances. There is a considerable amount of work needed to be done with students in our schools to improve racial and ethnic attitudes and to build more positive feelings and attitudes toward groups who are different, especially those groups who are living among us in the same community.

TABLE 5[8]

MEAN TOLERANCE SCORES FOR EACH ETHNIC GROUP BY SCHOOL

ETHNIC GROUP / SCHOOL	Sheridan	East Rock	Troup	Clemente	Jackie Robinson	Betsy Ross	Fair Haven	Nathan Hale	St. Aeeden's	TOTAL MEAN SCHOOL AVERAGE
1. Russian	1.8	1.7	1.5	1.3	1.3	1.7	1.5	1.4	1.1	1.4
2. Chinese	2.2	2.1	2.3	2.0	1.7	2.0	2.4	1.7	2.0	2.0
3. German	1.7	1.6	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.2	1.3
4. English	2.6	2.7	2.5	2.2	2.4	2.2	2.7	2.3	2.6	2.5
5. Mexican	2.1	2.1	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.4	1.9	1.6	1.4	1.7
6. American	2.9	2.8	2.9	2.7	2.8	2.9	2.8	2.9	2.8	2.8
7. Dutch	1.9	1.8	0.5	1.0	1.2	1.5	1.5	1.3	1.7	1.3
8. Negro/Black/Afro-American	2.4	2.6	2.7	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.2	2.0	2.4	2.4
9. Irish	2.1	2.4	1.0	1.5	1.1	2.3	2.1	2.1	2.5	1.9
10. Jewish	1.9	1.8	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.7	1.6	1.7	1.6	1.5
11. American Indian	2.3	2.7	2.4	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.4	1.7	1.8	2.2
12. Polish	1.8	1.9	0.7	0.7	0.9	1.7	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.3
13. Puerto Rican	2.0	2.5	2.6	2.1	1.5	1.5	2.5	1.1	1.1	1.9
14. White/Caucasian/Caucasian (White)	2.5	2.4	2.1	2.0	1.7	2.3	2.4	2.3	2.5	2.2
15. Bolgolian	0.5	1.1	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.4
16. Arab	1.5	1.4	0.4	0.9	0.7	0.8	1.2	1.1	0.8	0.9
17. Japanese	2.8	2.4	1.6	1.8	1.5	1.9	2.0	1.7	1.7	1.9
18. Italian	2.6	2.6	2.3	2.2	2.0	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.5
19. Korean	1.7	1.6	1.0	0.9	1.1	1.4	1.6	1.1	1.3	1.3
20. Hispanic/Latino/Spanish	1.8	2.1	1.4	1.7	1.3	0.9	2.1	0.9	1.1	1.5
21. Israeli	1.3	1.7	0.7	0.7	0.6	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.0	1.0
22. Canadian	2.3	2.0	1.4	1.7	1.3	2.2	2.1	1.8	2.1	1.9
23. Mulatto	0.6	1.0	0.1	0.4	0.1	0.3	0.9	0.1	0.3	0.4
24. Portuguese	1.8	1.9	1.8	1.6	1.3	1.5	1.6	1.4	1.2	1.6
25. French	2.4	2.4	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.0	2.1	2.2
26. Cuban	1.4	1.8	0.7	0.9	0.7	1.1	1.5	0.8	1.2	1.1
27. Vietnamese	1.4	1.6	0.9	0.4	0.5	0.9	1.4	0.8	1.0	0.9
28. Egyptian	1.7	1.8	0.8	1.2	1.0	1.2	1.8	1.6	1.2	1.4
29. Southerner	2.0	2.0	2.1	1.9	1.9	1.8	2.3	2.0	2.1	2.0
30. Haitian	1.1	1.2	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.8	0.2	0.5	0.6

A 3.0 would be a perfect score.

TABLE 7

MEAN SCORES FOR EACH ETHNIC GROUP BY RACE: WHITE, BLACK, HISPANIC, ASIAN & OTHER

ETHNIC GROUP	White No: 171	Black No: 178	Hispanic No: 29	Asian & Other No: 10	TOTAL Mean Race Average
1. Russian	1.6	1.3	1.4	2.0	1.6
2. Chinese	2.1	1.9	2.2	1.7	2.0
3. German	1.8	1.0	0.9	1.5	1.3
4. English	2.5	2.4	2.6	2.7	2.6
5. Mexican	1.7	1.7	2.4	1.9	1.9
6. American	2.9	2.8	2.6	2.8	2.8
7. Dutch	1.8	1.0	1.0	1.3	1.3
8. Negro/Black/Afro-American	2.1	2.7	2.4	2.2	2.4
9. Irish	2.5	1.3	1.4	2.1	1.8
10. Jewish	1.8	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4
11. American Indian	2.1	2.3	2.2	3.0	2.4
12. Polish	1.7	0.9	1.1	1.6	1.3
13. Puerto Rican	1.6	2.1	2.9	2.3	2.2
14. White/Caucasian/Caucasian (White)	2.6	2.0	1.9	2.0	2.1
15. Bolgolian	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.5
16. Arab	1.2	0.8	0.9	0.7	0.9
17. Japanese	2.1	1.7	1.9	1.8	1.9
18. Italian	2.8	2.2	2.3	2.9	2.6
19. Korean	1.6	1.0	1.0	1.6	1.3
20. Hispanic/Latino/Spanish	1.3	1.5	2.7	1.9	1.9
21. Israeli	1.3	0.8	0.9	0.9	1.0
22. Canadian	2.2	1.6	1.6	2.0	1.9
23. Mulatto	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.3
24. Portuguese	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.9	1.7
25. French	2.4	2.1	2.1	2.5	2.2
26. Cuban	1.2	0.9	2.2	0.9	1.8
27. Vietnamese	1.3	0.7	0.8	1.2	1.0
28. Egyptian	1.8	1.1	1.1	0.9	1.2
29. Southerner	2.1	2.0	1.7	1.7	1.9
30. Haitian	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.8	0.7
Classmate	19.6	15.9	17.8	18.7	18.0
Playmate	17.0	14.3	15.0	15.8	15.5
Neighbor	17.3	13.5	15.7	16.2	15.6
Tolerance Total	54.0	43.9	48.5	50.7	49.2

30 would be a perfect score for Classmate, Playmate and Neighbor.
90 would be a perfect score for the Tolerance Total

TABLE 6

MEAN SCORES BY SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL DISTANCE AND TOLERANCE TOWARD DIFFERENT ETHNIC GROUPS

School	No. of Students	Classmate	Playmate	Neighbor	Tolerance Total
Sheridan	45	19.6	18.4	18.3	56.3
East Rock	50	20.8	19.2	19.8	59.9
Troup	47	15.8	14.1	13.0	43.0
Clemente	46	16.4	13.9	13.0	43.2
J. Robinson	43	14.0	13.4	12.3	39.9
Betsy Ross	43	17.6	14.8	15.7	48.1
Fair Haven	45	21.0	16.8	17.0	55.0
Nathan Hale	43	17.0	14.0	14.1	45.2
St. Aeden's	26	17.0	15.0	15.3	47.2
	TOTAL 388				

30 would be a perfect mean score for Classmate, Playmate, and Neighbor. 90 would be a perfect mean score for the Tolerance Total.

CONCLUSION

If our nation is to survive as a "Nation of Nationalities" and as a pluralistic society, then we need more information in the areas of intergroup relations and interracial attitudes to effectively deal with the critical issues of the eighties. We also need to seek the means for our students to better confront the challenges that they will meet as the adults and parents of the nineties.

The Directors of the Gesell Institute of Child Development stated that "If members of different racial groups are going to live together harmoniously in this country, as we eventually must, we obviously need to understand each other better than we do now."

Conclusion

On the basis of the related literature and the data in this study, it was found that children entered school with race and ethnic attitude preferences already in the process of formation. They usually have little concept of race, or ethnicity but have absorbed attitudes from parents, older siblings, television, the media, and from current community feelings toward different ethnic groups. In the school situation, race and ethnic preferences may be slightly modified by the attitude of the teacher or by the content of courses, but this influence is not so great as might be supposed because of prejudice being learned outside of school.

Sociologists have indicated that casual contact between different ethnic groups is not enough to counteract prejudice but often increased hostile attitudes. However, when groups are brought together on terms of nearly equal social and economic status to work together to accomplish a common interest or goal, the resulting cooperation usually proved a pleasant and rewarding experience. Such contact usually reduced hostile feelings and prejudice between different ethnic groups. An important concept that was found in most of the studies investigated, was that, in general, the people who were the most prejudiced were those who have had the least contact with the group they disliked.

In the literature, prejudice refers to adverse judgements that individuals hand down about people who are of a different race, culture, religion, or sex. These judgments are without just grounds and are made without sufficient knowledge. Sociological studies have found that racial and religious hatred is still rampant among today's teenagers. Racial integration of schools, which began in the United States in the 1950s, has not always achieved the desired effects. At times, the consequences of desegregation have been fear, mistrust and violence. Even where racial tensions are not present, cross-racial friendships tend to be rare. In recent years, both researchers and educators have spent large amounts of time and money trying to develop approaches, programs and/or materials that will be capable of reducing negative racial and ethnic attitudes among the young. There is still much work to be done in this important area.